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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 001081

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/01/2015

TAGS: PTER PREL CO ELN

SUBJECT: GOC LIKELY TO AUTHORIZE ELN MEETING WITH
FACILITATOR IN MEXICO

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On January 29, GOC High Commissioner for Peace Luis Carlos Restrepo told Ambassador that the GOC was on the verge of an agreement with the National Liberation Army's (ELN) Central Command (COCE) to allow COCE representatives safe passage to Mexico to engage in face-to-face talks with Government of Mexico facilitator Ambassador Andres Valencia. According to Restrepo, the sides overcame the stumbling block presented by the GOC's demand for a prior ELN cease-fire by stipulating that neither the ELN nor GOC security forces would engage in "military actions" while COCE representatives were in Mexico. Restrepo said Valencia would soon provide the GOC with the ELN's formal written proposal. President Uribe had already given the green light to the proposal as Restrepo had explained it to him and Armed Forces Commander General Carlos Alberto Ospina.

¶2. (C) Restrepo said the ELN representatives' trip to Mexico could last up to three weeks. The issues for discussion with Valencia would be limited to preparations for face-to-face negotiations with the GOC and formalization of the ELN's unofficial cease-fire. The discussions would be discrete, with the only press coverage being that of the Mexican Government. Restrepo said the GOC planned to announce this process at the upcoming international donor's conference in Cartagena.

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